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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Crime prevention and criminal justice

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Letter dated 2 October 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith the Chair's summary of the governmental expert meeting that was held in Doha from 27 to 29 September 2014, on the preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in 2015 (see annex). The meeting was convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/185.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13, 19 (a), 105 and 115.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 2 October 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Governmental expert meeting on the preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Doha, 27-29 September 2014)

Chair's summary

1. A governmental expert group meeting on the preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Doha from 27 to 29 September 2014, was organized by the Government of the State of Qatar in its capacity as host of the Thirteenth Congress. States Members of the United Nations together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the secretariat of the Thirteenth Congress, participated in the meeting.

2. The meeting provided an opportunity for experts from the regional groups and members of the Bureau of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to engage fully in the substantive preparations for the Thirteenth Congress and demonstrated the strong commitment of Qatar to ensuring that the Thirteenth Congress fulfils the mandate given to it by the Commission and the General Assembly.

3. The meeting was convened to facilitate discussion on the contribution that the Thirteenth Congress could make to the deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2014/22, and to gather views on the way forward for the substantive preparation of the draft Doha declaration (see the agenda, contained in enclosure I, and the concept note, contained in enclosure II).

1. Contribution that the Thirteenth Congress could make to the post-2015 development agenda

4. All delegations warmly thanked the Government of Qatar for its generous hospitality and for providing Member States with an important platform to have a dialogue on the preparations for and on the outcome of the Thirteenth Congress. Delegations commended Qatar for taking this initiative and noted with appreciation that the meeting was the first opportunity for countries to meet and exchange views before the beginning of the process of informal consultations on the final outcome of the Congress. They added that the occasion was extremely useful and rewarding.

5. UNODC introduced a draft report on how the Thirteenth Congress could contribute to the post-2015 development agenda, following the process established by the General Assembly. Many speakers noted that the Congress would provide a unique opportunity for Member States and a broad spectrum of practitioners and relevant stakeholders, including civil society and academia, not only to discuss challenges and priorities in crime prevention and criminal justice, but also to highlight the links between crime prevention and criminal justice, the rule of law, human rights protection and sustainable development. Furthermore, they stressed the importance for Member States to have a consistent approach, at both the national

and international levels, in discussions on the post-2015 development agenda in various forums and processes.

6. Speakers thanked the secretariat for making available a well-structured draft report in which the need for a comprehensive approach to crime prevention and criminal justice had been underscored. They also noted that the draft report was based on a limited number of responses and that it would be desirable for additional responses to be considered, to ensure that the report reflected the broadest possible range of issues of interest to Member States.

7. It was emphasized that the Thirteenth Congress was uniquely placed to contribute to the important discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and, through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to follow up on this agenda.

8. Speakers highlighted that many issues reflected in the draft report had also been mentioned in the reports of the four regional preparatory meetings, which demonstrated that there was a convergence in the priorities of Member States.

9. Many participants elaborated on the links between crime prevention and sustainable development, noting that the two were mutually reinforcing and that the criminal justice system and the institutions comprising it formed a key pillar of sustainable development.

10. Speakers stressed the importance of early prevention, underscoring the role of primary education for all children, which is important for developing a culture of lawfulness, as well as the relevance of instilling shared values on upholding the rule of law, as a crucial element of sustainable development.

11. In terms of gender equality, it was noted that violence against women, as well as the empowerment of women and girls, needed to be properly addressed.

12. In addition, it was considered important to highlight the concept of common and shared responsibility in the broader area of crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as technical assistance and capacity-building.

13. Speakers emphasized the necessity of integrating into overall rule of law efforts issues related to children, especially children deprived of their liberty and those who come into contact with the criminal justice system, including as witnesses and victims of crime.

14. Speakers stressed the important role that youth play in crime prevention and criminal justice and in sustainable development, as well as the need to provide sufficient opportunities, including decent employment, to youth and working migrants. Efforts aimed at alleviating poverty and inequality, in particular among youth, were also considered to be closely linked to more effective crime prevention and criminal justice policies.

15. Some speakers emphasized the importance of reaffirming the commitment of countries to fighting and ending impunity, which was directly linked to security, the safety of citizens and the elimination of safe havens for criminal conduct. The issue of impunity was extremely important, as it was deemed to have adverse effects on sustainable development. Furthermore, the importance of finding an effective balance between deterrence and prevention was mentioned.

16. Speakers also noted the links between justice and the rule of law and sustainable development in relation to the post-2015 development agenda. The importance of human security, transitional justice and reconciliation processes, as well as the relevance of stability and reconstruction in post-conflict areas were also mentioned.

17. Some speakers stressed the need to strengthen regional, subregional and international cooperation in making special efforts to tackle the factors that foster crime, terrorism and extremism.

18. Some delegations raised the need to include additional crime prevention and criminal justice priorities in the report and to strengthen international cooperation in criminal matters.

19. Delegations also stressed the importance of building capacity and providing technical assistance to national justice and law enforcement officials. In that regard, it was highlighted that UNODC performed a valuable function, using its expertise to strengthen the capacity of the criminal justice system and its institutions to promote the rule of law in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

20. Also highlighted was the desirability of Member States having at their disposal tools to assess their own progress in implementing their commitments in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice and in promoting the rule of law for the achievement of the sustainable development goals. The expertise that UNODC could offer in that regard was stressed.

21. The participants in the meeting expressed appreciation for the fact that the report prepared by the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970) reflected the crucial role that the criminal justice system and its constituent institutions could play as a pillar for the achievement of sustainable development. Emphasis was placed on keeping mention of the mutually reinforcing relationship between the rule of law and sustainable development in the final outcome of the post-2015 development agenda. In particular, the participants noted the importance of proposed goal 16, stressing the need to preserve and maintain its content in the future negotiation process.

22. It was emphasized that the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, acting upon the advice provided by the Thirteenth Congress, had an important role to play in promoting appropriate follow-up to the relevant components of the post-2015 development agenda within its area of competence.

2. Elements of the draft declaration

23. In order to facilitate the discussion of the elements of the draft declaration, it was explained that a reference document had been prepared by Qatar containing a consolidated version of all the recommendations made at the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress.

24. That document provided participants with a comprehensive overview of the recommendations made at the four regional preparatory meetings in a single text that reflected the priorities and concerns of countries and regions and that covered both substantive items and workshop topics.

25. It was mentioned that the governmental expert meeting provided delegations from the States members of the Economic Commission for Europe, which did not

have a regional preparatory meeting, with an initial opportunity to share their views, proposals and recommendations ahead of the informal consultations on the outcome document.

26. The secretariat reminded delegations that the Thirteenth Congress should adopt a single declaration and that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/184, that declaration should contain recommendations reflecting the deliberations of the high-level segment, the discussion of the agenda items and the workshops of the Congress.

27. The discussion regarding the elements to be included in the draft declaration revolved around five main themes: structure, content, follow-up, impact and process.

28. Bearing in mind the overall theme of the Thirteenth Congress and its links to the post-2015 development agenda, speakers called for the declaration to contain a strong political message addressed to the international community at large in order to integrate crime prevention and criminal justice matters into the wider United Nations agenda and to ensure that the content of goal 16 proposed by the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals be preserved in the post-2015 development agenda.

29. Delegations elaborated on their interpretation of "short and concise". The general feeling was that the document should be well structured and use the Congress agenda items (and workshop topics) as a framework, with a view to enhancing the readability of the document and making it understandable to a wider audience. Some speakers stressed the need for flexibility and the importance of having a document that was inclusive and comprehensive and that was structured by cluster.

30. A strong call was also made to strive for a document that was well focused and action-oriented and that would provide a basis for making a real impact.

31. Issues for inclusion in the draft declaration were mentioned, with some delegations making reference to their national priorities and to the need for enhanced international cooperation to combat all forms of crime, including new and emerging ones. The need to strengthen regional and subregional cooperation in combating all forms of crime was also highlighted as an important pillar of crime prevention and criminal justice. Special emphasis was placed on more effective and flexible forms of mutual legal assistance, especially in cases involving the seizure, confiscation, freezing and return of the proceeds of crime.

32. The view was expressed that the listing of crimes was to be avoided and that the draft declaration should focus on general policy matters.

33. The participants in the meeting underscored the importance of a human rights-based approach to persons and victims who come into contact with the criminal justice system, especially groups in vulnerable situations and minorities. In that connection, many speakers emphasized the importance of the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice and of including in the draft declaration issues such as the treatment of prisoners and persons deprived of their liberty, the right of offenders to education, rehabilitation and reintegration into society, juvenile justice, transitional justice, urban crime, restorative justice and alternative measures to imprisonment.

34. The role played by civil society and the private sector and the relevance of public participation in contributing to effective crime prevention were also emphasized.

35. The participants in the meeting stressed that, to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officials, it was crucial to provide technical assistance, build capacity, exchange best practices and share information at the national, regional and international levels. In that connection, it was stressed that, for many developing countries, capacity-building and technical assistance were crucial for helping them to comply with obligations stemming from the ratification of or accession to international legal instruments.

36. It was also noted that, during the process of negotiating the Doha declaration, the spirit of Vienna should be preserved, including in the informal consultations leading to the finalization of the text of the declaration. In that regard, it was emphasized that the spirit of Vienna should be employed in such a manner as to facilitate, not block, consensus.

3. Outcome of the meeting

37. The participants in the meeting agreed that the present summary should be disseminated as widely as possible to ensure that Member States not present at the meeting would be informed of the discussions. In response, the Government of Qatar explained that it would transmit the summary to both the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the General Assembly.

38. The participants in the meeting requested the Government of Qatar to prepare, in cooperation with UNODC, a preliminary document for the development of the draft declaration to guide the informal consultations to be held in Vienna following the next scheduled intersessional meeting on 6 November 2014. In that regard, it was also suggested that such a document be circulated prior to the first round of informal consultations. It was also suggested that a discussion on the way forward be held during the informal consultations, in order to better structure the outcome of the consultations.

4. List of participants

39. The following countries participated in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, Guatemala, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United States of America and Uruguay.

Enclosure I

Governmental expert meeting on preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Doha, 27-29 September 2014)

Agenda

Saturday, 27 September 2014	
9.30 a.m.	Official registration
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Welcome and opening of the meeting
	Introduction of the draft report on the contribution that the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, considering its main theme, could make to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda
	General discussion and feedback on the report
1-3 p.m.	Lunch break
3-6 p.m.	General discussion and feedback on the report (*continued*)
Sunday, 28 September 2014	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Elements of the draft political declaration
1-3 p.m.	Lunch break
3-6.30 p.m.	Elements of the draft political declaration (*continued*)
Monday, 29 September 2014	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Conclusions and the way forward
1-3 p.m.	Lunch and visit to the Qatar National Convention Centre

Enclosure II

Governmental expert meeting on preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Doha, 27-29 September 2014)

Concept note

Introduction

The Government of the State of Qatar wishes to provide opportunities for Member States to engage in the substantive preparations of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in order to ensure that the Congress fulfils the mandate given to it by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the General Assembly.

This governmental expert meeting brings together experts from the regional groups and members of the Bureau of the Commission to contribute to the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress by holding a debate on elements for inclusion in the draft declaration in advance of the Congress and by providing additional input to the draft report on the contribution of the Congress to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

Substantive background and mandates

Post-2015 development agenda

At the twenty-third session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (12-16 May 2014), many speakers noted that the Thirteenth Congress would take place on the threshold of the United Nations work on the post-2015 development agenda and acknowledged that the Congress would offer a unique opportunity to place at centre stage the role of the criminal justice system in promoting the rule of law and in support of sustainable development.

Also at the twenty-third session, the Commission recommended the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of a draft resolution entitled "The Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the post-2015 development agenda" (E/CN.15/2014/L.14/Rev.1).

By adopting that resolution, the Economic and Social Council would invite Member States, international organizations and all relevant stakeholders to provide to UNODC their views regarding the contribution that the Thirteenth Congress, considering its main theme, could make to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, while respecting the process established by the General Assembly, and would request UNODC to report to the Congress on that matter.

Elaboration of a draft declaration as outcome of the Congress

In paragraph 5 of its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly decided that, in accordance with its resolution 56/119, the Thirteenth Congress should adopt a single declaration, to be submitted to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for its consideration, and that the declaration should contain the major

recommendations reflecting and emerging from the deliberations of the high-level segment, as well as the discussion of the agenda items and the workshops.

In paragraph 21 of that same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Commission to accord sufficient time at its twenty-third session to reviewing the progress made in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress, to finalize in a timely manner all outstanding organizational and substantive arrangements and to make its recommendations to the Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

At the twenty-third session of the Commission, several speakers discussed the forthcoming consultations for the elaboration of a draft declaration in advance of the Thirteenth Congress. The need to ensure the inclusive nature of the consultations on the draft and to engage, at an early stage, other organizations and entities were also highlighted.

Also at the twenty-third session, the Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council the approval of a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly entitled "Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice" (E/CN.15/2014/L.7/Rev.1).

By adopting that resolution, the General Assembly would note with appreciation the progress made thus far in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress and take note of the discussion guide prepared by the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, for the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress.

In addition, the Assembly would acknowledge the relevance of the regional preparatory meetings, which have examined the substantive items of the agenda and the workshop topics of the Thirteenth Congress and made action-oriented recommendations to serve as a basis for the draft declaration to be adopted by the Thirteenth Congress.

Moreover, the Assembly would request the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to begin, in accordance with Assembly resolution 68/185, the preparation of a short and concise draft declaration reflecting the theme of the Thirteenth Congress, at intersessional meetings to be held well in advance of the Congress, taking into account the recommendations of the regional preparatory meetings and consultations with relevant organizations and entities.

Objectives of the governmental expert meeting

The governmental expert meeting aims to allow government experts to review the following:

(a) The draft report on the contribution that the Thirteenth Congress, considering its main theme, could make to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. In that regard, the Government of the State of Qatar has asked the secretariat to have the draft report ready for the meeting, so as to enable the governmental experts to provide feedback and inputs towards its finalization. Given the high importance attached the post-2015 development agenda, it is particularly important that the report benefit from the perspectives of Member States and that it

reflect, in a comprehensive manner, the issues that Member States consider to be pertinent;

(b) In accordance with past practice, the host country normally takes the lead in organizing informal consultations prior to the congress, with a view to preparing a draft of the final declaration that is as close as possible to being completed. Therefore, an additional objective of the governmental expert meeting is to identify key elements of a first draft to be used as the basis for the informal consultations. Pursuant to draft resolution E/CN.15/2014/L.7/Rev.1 and General Assembly resolutions 68/185 and 56/119, the declaration should be based on the recommendations of the regional preparatory meetings and other input from the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, it should be short and concise and it should reflect the theme of the Congress.